

YOUNG BOYS FIGURE HELD FOR SLAYING

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A man police believe is a leader of the Young Boys Inc. murder-for-hire squad was charged Monday with first-degree murder.

James Earl Butler, 22, gunned down James Harriel, 20, in a parking lot at W. Eight Mile Road and Lahser about 7:45 p.m. Saturday, a murder warrant charges.

Homicide investigators say they believe "A-Team" hired killers have killed nine people recently. Four were shot with .45-caliber bullets in Detroit and Highland Park since Sept. 16.

Four members of the Young Boys drug-trafficking group were charged with first-degree murder in two killings earlier this year, one in Detroit and one in Troy

THE NINE KILLINGS are believed to be part of a power struggle over control of the Young Boys multimillion-dollar drug business. Police said drug dealers have been vying for the organization's business since its leaders were jailed following convictions on federal drug charges more than a year ago.

Authorities also said the killings point toward an internal struggle between followers of Milton (Butch) Jones and Raymond Peoples, two Young Boys founders and top leaders. Both are now in prison.

If the body count is any measure, Jones' faction appears to be winning, authorities say.

BUTLER, WHO WAS charged Monday, recently was paroled after serving time as a juvenile for murder. He was arraigned Monday in Harriel's slaying and was ordered held without bond pending a preliminary examination Oct. 12.

Police said Harriel, who lived in the 17300 block of Westover in Southfield, also was connected with another Young Boys murder. Police said Harriel left home with Shona Terrell Boyce, 18, on Sept. 16 shortly before Boyce was shot to death in a parking lot at 18330 W. Chicago.

Neighbors told police someone also shot at the Boyce home in the 10200 block of Nardin Aug. 22.

In another related killing, David Murry, 19, of the 400 block of Melbourne, was shot with a .45-caliber automatic pistol Wednesday, police said. Murry was killed as he sat in his car in front of 32 Elmhurst in Highland Park.

Police found \$1,000 in Murry's sock and said the killing was drug related.

MURRY'S FAMILY said he was a friend of Lamarr (Lakeside) Williams, 21, who was shot to death in the same manner Sept. 22 in a car on E. Seven Mile at Exeter.

Williams was charged in the March 17 ambush slaying of James Smith, 34. Police believe Williams was hired to kill Smith, the women's basketball coach at Highland Park Community College, in an apparent insurance scam.

Murder charges against Williams and his associate, Dennis Franklin, 18, were dropped in June when witnesses refused to identify them at their preliminary court examination.

Williams was a friend of and drug trafficker with Carl Garrett, 18, who was shot to death with a 9mm Uzi submachine gun July 17 as he rode his moped at W. McNichols and Schaefer, police said.

Garrett was a longtime friend and bodyguard of Peoples.

Police believe Garrett was killed because Portia Sturdevant Jones, 29, wife of Butch Jones, claimed two attempted robberies at her Troy home in May had been planned by Garrett's stepfather, Donald Bankston, 40.

Bankston was found dead June 22, slumped in the front seat of his car in northwest Detroit. He had been killed by the same Uzi and .44-caliber Magnum used in some of the killings, police said.

ONLY ONE of those charged in the nine Young Boys murders was in custody until Butler's arrest Saturday night in Detroit. Charles Victory Obey, 18, of the 13500 block of Woodmont, has been held in lieu of bond in the Oakland County Jail since his arrest in the Troy case.

Obey and two others are charged with the May 30 killing of Ricky Darnell Gracey, 26, in the front yard of Jones' home on Adams Road in Troy.

Police still are seeking Jones' wife and Spencer Tracy Holloway, 20, who lived in the 17400 block of West hampton in Southfield, in the same case.

POLICE ALSO are seeking Farod Mallory, also known as Farod Crawford, 18, of Lathrup Village, who has been charged with killing Jerry Kenney, 33, in Detroit April 30.

Witnesses said Kenney was an independent drug dealer who was killed during an argument over rights to sell drugs at the corner of Dexter and Richton -- claimed by the Young Boys organization as its territory.

He was shot four times. One bullet recovered from his abdomen came from a .44-caliber Magnum registered to Mallory, police sources said.

Mallory's home was one of the places authorities sought accused Young Boys hit man Kurt (McGurk) Napier while he was on the run after Detroit police claimed he shot at one of them while being chased in a west side alley on other charges.

Napier, the subject of a widespread police manhunt last year, is scheduled to go on trial today for the killing of Joseph (Wamp) Brown, another alleged Young Boys hit man, on May 12, 1983, the day after Brown testified on behalf of Peoples in a gun case.

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